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## **Indian Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges**

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### **Abstract:**

*As a result of significant economic expansion, there has been an increase in the need for competent human resources and an enhancement in the competitiveness of Indian enterprises in the global market. As a result, the higher education sector is now a focus of attention in India. Nevertheless, there are significant challenges facing the company in terms of the quantity and quality of the education provided, funding, diversity, and the number of people working in research and development (R&D). Higher education offered by private institutions has supplemented efforts made by the government to address the rising need for workers with specialised skills. The educational system in India, particularly its universities, needs to become more open-minded, adaptable, and dynamic. The field of higher education in India has seen significant growth over the course of the last several decades. There has been a significant increase in the number of private institutions that are now providing traditional as well as professional fields of study. The number of colleges and universities is still relatively low, despite the fact that the demand for higher education is continually on the rise and that globalisation and economic liberalisation have created new possibilities. a large network of educational institutions such universities and colleges, the majority of which operate on their own financially and are accredited by the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities for Technical Education (AICTE). This article takes a look at some of the more recent happenings in India's rapidly growing higher education industry.*

*Keywords: Higher education, AICTE, Technical Education, Higher education industry*

### **Introduction:**

India has a long history, and over that time many different types of universities and colleges have been founded. Private institutions proliferated, distance education grew in popularity, public universities and colleges launched self-financing programmes, international institutions began delivering courses either independently or in partnership with their Indian counterparts, and the non-university education sector grew quickly. Higher education in India has grown in response to the country's rapidly developing economy. Following the country's independence, the state decided to invest in both the creation of a growth strategy and the foundation of universities since they shared comparable objectives. Many who keep tabs on India's higher education scene are pessimistic about the country's schools because of issues with access, equity, and quality. The state's lack of decisive action is, of course, to blame. "



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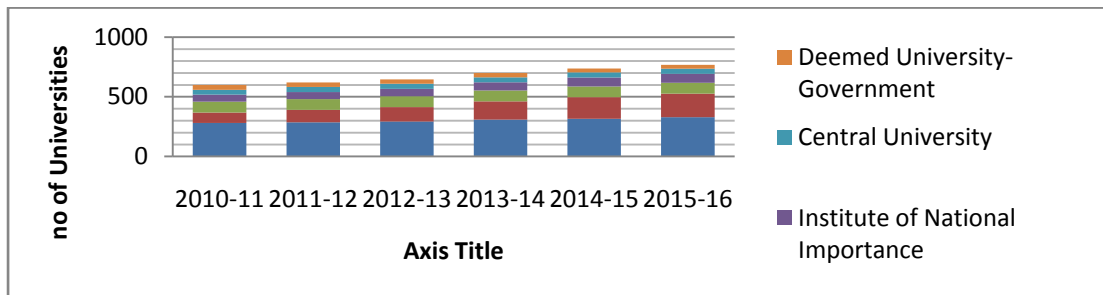
To meet the difficulties of the twenty-first century's complexity, the expanding availability of opportunities, and an ageing population, more work has to be put into enhancing the educational system. To stay up with the fast pace of globalisation and preserve competitive advantage in the global economy, it is crucial for a country to adjust to market pressures. The accumulation of knowledge is the basis for progress. Promoting public and private investment in education will, on its own, help to produce additional job possibilities because of the labor-intensive nature of education. Everyone who want to increase their marketability by earning a college degree should be allowed to do so. Therefore, secondary-level manufacturing has to be calibrated, and quality standards need to be certified, in order to gain the confidence of market forces. Future economic growth requires a connection between rising demand and increasing supply. This will lead to the implementation of a new comprehensive plan for education over the long term. Standards for all levels of education, from primary school through college, will be included in this strategy, ensuring that the required expertise may be obtained. To meet and exceed future expectations, we need to rethink all of these factors, including funding, access and fairness, quality standards, relevance, and, finally, responsiveness.

### **Growth of Higher Education Institutes:**

In a nation like India, where the economy is still expanding, investing in higher education is crucial. The quantity and quality of India's higher education institutions have expanded greatly in recent decades. About half of India's roughly 35,000 colleges and 700 universities were founded in the last decade. More than five thousand new institutions were added to India's higher education system in only one year, a growth rate of twenty percent. National University of Educational Planning and Administration estimates that spending over 9 lakh crore on higher education is necessary to get a GER of 30 percent. This sum includes not only the money needed to build new facilities, but also salaries and other operating expenses. More over 1.5% of China's GDP goes into higher education, whereas in India that figure is less than 0.5% of GDP. The number of colleges and universities in India has grown dramatically in recent decades ( E& Y,2012). There were 799 institutions included in 2015–16; state public universities accounted for 41% of the total, while state private universities made up 24.6%. State private institutions increased by 126.44 percent between 2010–11 and 2015 (Chart 1).

**Chart: 1**

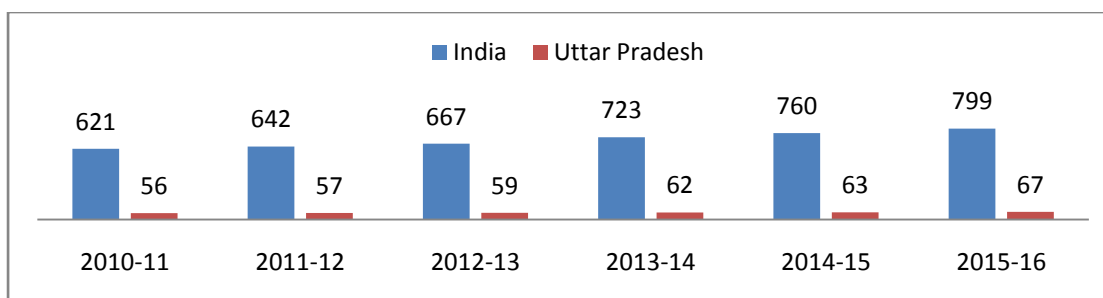
**Growth of Universities in India**



University growth is seen in chart 2 per state. The number of universities in India grew by 76.97 percent between 2010-11 and 2015-16. The majority of states have seen a rise in the number of universities through time, although Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have seen a reduction. A number of considered universities that did not fulfil UGC requirements were shut down in the past. Therefore, it is expected that the current trend of fewer institutions in India would continue.

**Chart: 2**

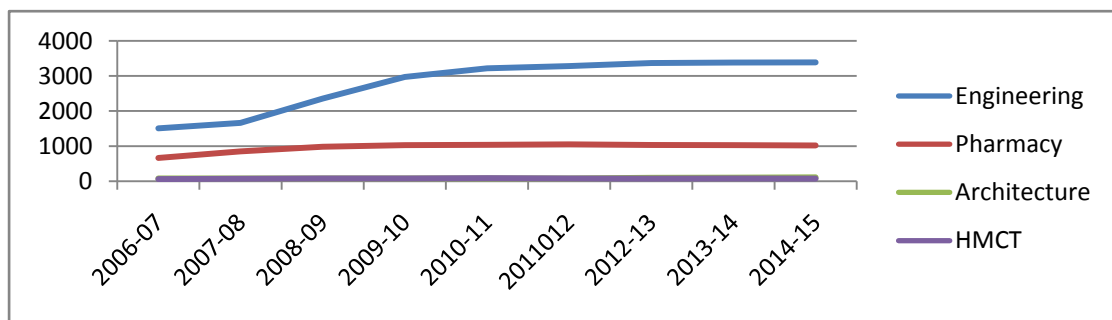
**University Expansion in India and Uttar Pradesh**



There are 268 schools of higher education, with 39071 affiliated organisations. There are at least 500 undergraduates enrolled at 17 different institutions. ChatrapatiSahuji Maharaj Kanpur University is home to the majority of Kanpur's educational institutions (1177). Seventy-eight percent of colleges and universities are owned by private entities, with another 64 percent being self-sufficient. Private higher education options are not uniform throughout the states. Few people enrol in schools nowadays. Twenty-two percent of colleges and universities have enrollment of 100 or fewer students, while forty percent have enrollment of 100–500. In other words, 62.7% of schools have under 500 pupils enrolled. Only 4.3% of

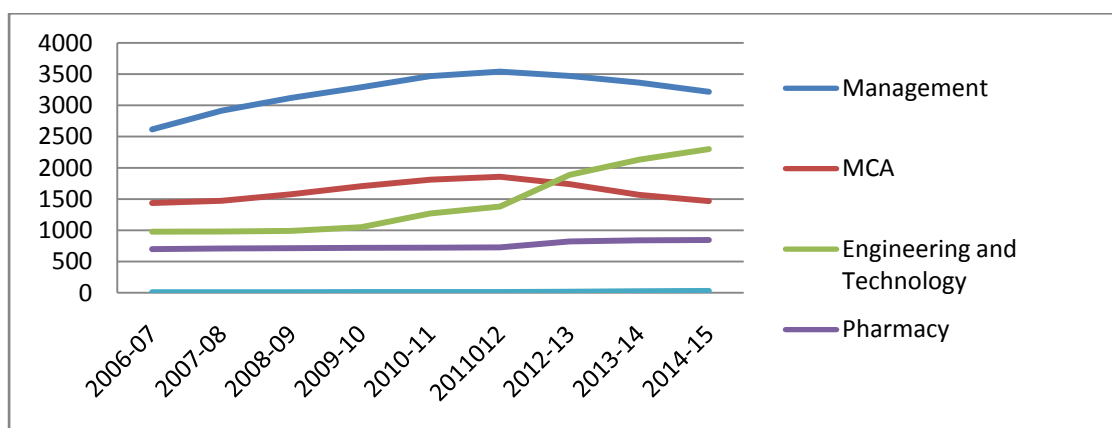
schools have more than 3,000 enrolled pupils. There was a significant rise in the number of technical schools in India that provide undergraduate technical education from 2006-07 to 2014-2015. But unlike other sorts of institutions, engineering schools grew at a far faster rate (124.28 percent) (Chart 3).

**Chart: 3**  
**Growth of Technical Institutions the country**  
**(Under Graduate)**



During the years 2006-2007 to 2014-2015, the number of technical institutes in India that offered education for postgraduate students increased. This trend continued till the most recent academic year. In contrast to this, institutions that focus on engineering and technology saw a growth rate that was 134.93 percent greater than that of other institutions (Chart 4).

**Chart: 4**  
**Growth of Technical Institutions the country**  
**(Post Graduate)**

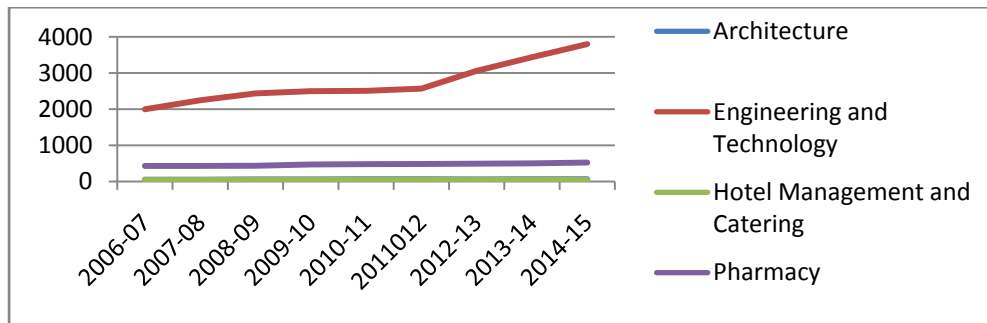


In India, the number of engineering and technology schools that provide diploma programmes increased by 90.23 percent during the academic years 2006-07 and 2014-15. This rise occurred within the period of time covered by the study. During the same time

period, the number of technical schools that provide diploma programmes in architecture has grown by 26.53 percent, while the number of technical institutions that offer pharmacy diploma programmes has grown by 21.67 percent (Chart 5).

**Chart: 5**

**Growth of Technical Institutions in the country (Diploma)**



The value of a college degree has increased, but not as much as a professional one. At present, the private sector accounts for over 80% of both educational establishments and student enrollment in professional programmes. Table 3 shows how many schools there are that provide graduate and professional degrees. Eight out of ten students in professional degree programmes choose to attend private universities rather than state universities. There were 3,730 such institutions in 1999–2000, but by 2005–2006, the number had risen to 9,947. During that period, income grew by a whopping 167%. There has been the highest growth in colleges of education, physical therapy, pharmacy, and engineering. In the first decade of the new century, we must acknowledge the reality that investment in higher education is crucial for national progress. We need to do all we can to widen people's ability to use it. The gross enrollment ratio should be at least 20% at the end of the first decade. There is great promise in the field of distance education, which has the potential to enlarge both the availability of higher education and the notion of lifelong learning (Powar, 2002).

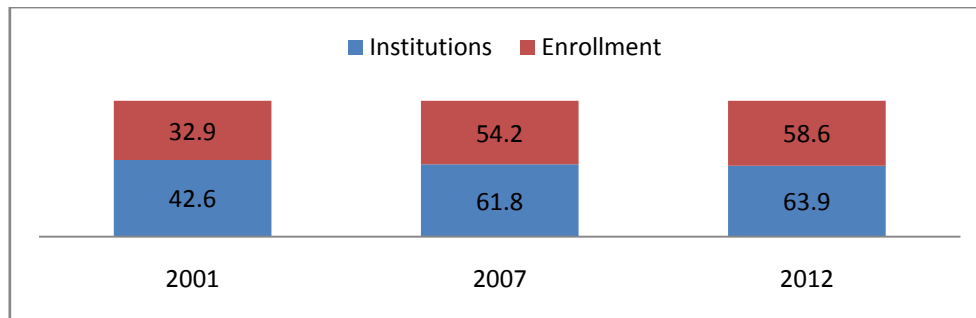
The percentage of funding for universities that comes from the private/corporate sector has grown substantially over time. More than 64% of colleges and universities in 2012 were privately owned, with 58.6% of students attending (Chart 6). The business community in India has funded the creation of a number of private institutions, and a small number of foreign universities are opening campuses around the country. Some examples of institutions catering to the corporate sector are Shiv Nadar University, J.P. University of Information Technology, O.P. Jindal University, Azim Prem Ji University, and others. While the original



motivation for corporate organisations to enter the higher education sector was altruistic, this trend has recently seen a dramatic uptick. There are 4225 government colleges, 5750 government colleges, and 7650 private colleges, as well as 240 universities, 7 private universities, 38 deemed universities, and 63 unaided deemed institutions (unaided). In addition, there are 150 international schools serving a total of around 8,000 pupils. Private universities and professional educational institutes have proliferated in recent years in many parts of India, including the national capital area, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and the rest of the country's southern states.

**Chart: 6**

**Private Sector/Corporate Sector Share in Higher Education**



**Enrolments in Higher Education:**

Table 3.10 displays the estimated young adult population. There may be 142 million persons in the 18–23 age bracket in 2030. This demonstrates that India needs additional universities. When compared to both developed and developing nations, the United States' gross enrollment in higher education is well below the 30 percent goal set for 2030.

From 30 in 1950–1951 to 564 in 2010–2011. 18 times as many universities have been established. There were 695 colleges in 1950–1951, whereas there were 33023 in 2010–2011. The number of colleges has risen by a factor of 47 throughout the specified time period. Huge government activities and policy choices led to this growth in higher education. While higher education has expanded, it has expanded unevenly throughout the country. INDIA There were 634 state universities and colleges as of December 2011. The state with the highest concentration of universities and other postsecondary institutions was Tamil Nadu (59), followed by Uttar Pradesh (42). (58). These two states accounted for 18% of the total colleges in the country. College and university options are not uniform from one state to the





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next. Inequality in access to higher education has grown as it has expanded. The distribution of universities is very unbalanced. There is a preponderance of higher education institutions in the south. When looking at new establishments established between 2000-01 and 2004-05, the south accounted for 33%. Twenty-two percent of the country's universities were located in the centre, followed by the west, the east, and the north. The northeast has the fewest universities.

The Gross Enrollment Ratio in India is 18.8% as per a provisional poll announced on September 28, 2012, with the Other Backward Class registering 27.1 %. The overall enrollment rate among Schedule Castes was 10.2%, with female enrolment at 4.4%. There were 23.3% people of colour within the teaching faculty, compared to 7.4% people of colour and 2.9% people of colour. According to the first "all India survey on higher education" conducted in 2010–11, there were 19,249 foreign students studying in India, including 6,842 women. The country's university population has grown by 7.5% per year over the last decade, outpacing the 4.7% CAGR seen from 1951 to 2001. The yearly growth rate of colleges increased to 11 percent from 2001 to 2011 from 6.1 percent from 1951 to 2001. One major distinction between China and India is the lack of governmental involvement in higher education in India. In 2005-06, 52% of students in India went to private schools, whereas just 10% of Chinese students did. China's thriving higher education industry may thank its more than 2300 institutions for their success. There are around three thousand colleges and universities in India. That number is ten times bigger than China's. In India, the vast majority of higher education institutions are independent from the government.

The quality of universities has increased throughout time. With the XI Plan, India transformed its higher education system from "elite" to "mass" when the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) hit 15%. Our gross export ratio (19.4 percent) is lower than the international average (29 percent). Since GER has increased, more people now have access to higher education. Over 35,53,912 new colleges and universities have been established since independence. The number of colleges and universities has grown by a factor of 20. A low GER indicates that the supply of universities has not grown to meet the rising demand for higher education. Given the crucial developmental stage our country is at, GER and youth education have acquired prominence. By the year 2020, India will have 116 million working-age people, whereas China will have 94 million. By 2020, the average age in India will be only 29, whereas it will be in the 40s in many developed nations. Taking advantage of the

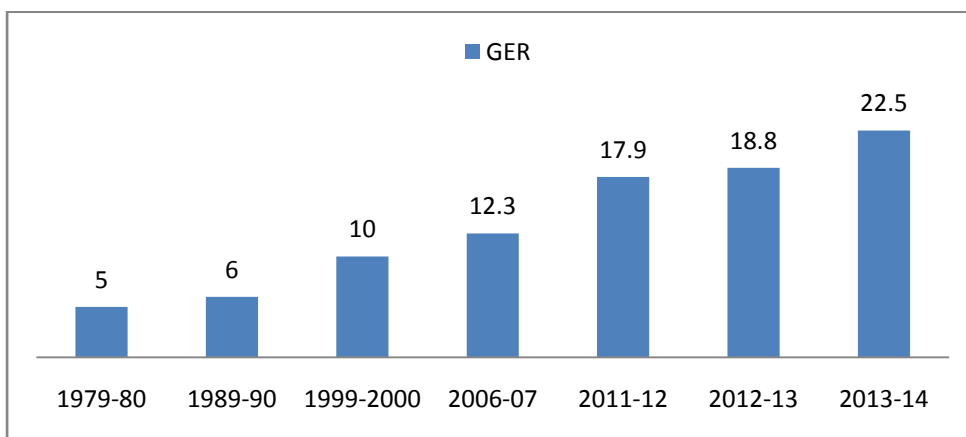
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demographic dividend will require making use of this massive workforce. It's imperative that we as a nation have the foresight to invest in the education and training of so many people. India would be able to provide a sufficient number of stable employment opportunities if its education system encouraged the development of entrepreneurial skills, creativity, and initiative. The percentage of Indians aged 18 to 23 who are enrolled in or have completed any kind of postsecondary education is just 19.4 percent. Compared to other developed nations and even to Brazil, Russia, and China, India has a relatively low GER. The gross enrollment ratio has grown as a result of the growing number of Indian universities. Total enrolment is much lower than in many other nations. In 1979–80, gross enrollment was at 5%; by 2013–14, it had risen to 22.5%. (Chart 6).

**Chart: 6**

**Gross Enrollment Ratio in Higher Education**

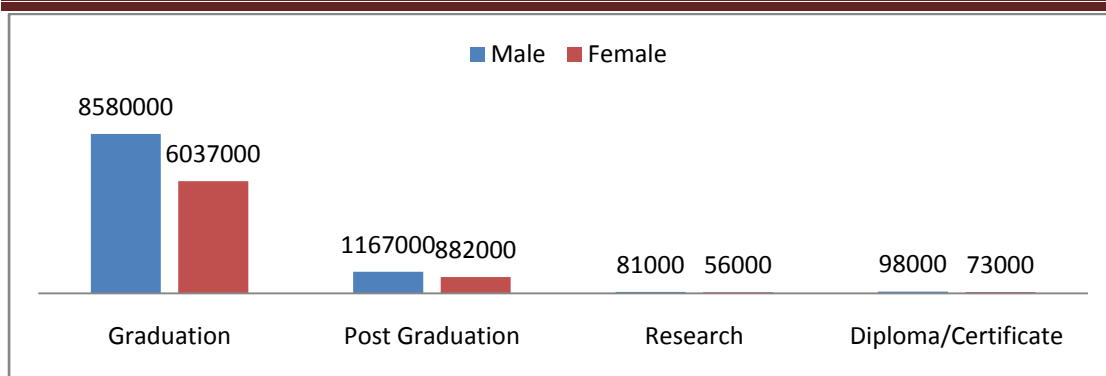


About 86% of all students were graduates, and 12% were postgraduates, of the entire student body. About 58% of the overall student body was comprised of boys, while 42% was made up of girls. In graduate and postsecondary diploma/certificate programmes, women were found to make up a somewhat larger percentage of the student body (Chart 7).

**Chart: 7**

**Course-wise Enrollment of Students in India**

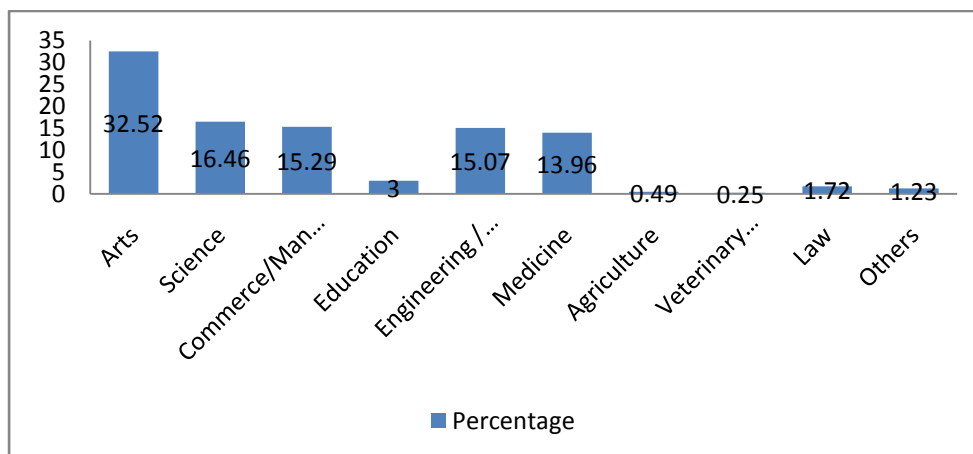




The Faculty of Arts accounted for approximately a third of the overall enrollment, the Faculty of Science for 16.46%, and the Faculty of Commerce/Management for 15.29%. In terms of percentage of overall enrollment in 2011, engineering and technology accounted for 15%, while medicine accounted for 14%. ( Chart 8)

**Chart: 8**

**Faculty-wise Enrollment of Students in India**



Ph.D., M. Phil., Postgrad, Undergrad, PG Diploma, Diploma, Certificate, and Integrated students make up 8 of the total enrolment. There are more college-aged people in India than any other country. A similar issue affects the states/UTs as well. Seventy-nine percent of all students are enrolled at the undergraduate level or below. About 11.3% of all students, or 39.2 lakh individuals, are postgraduates. There are 1,26,451 Ph.D. students, including 5,753 Integrated Ph.D. students. The ratio of undergraduates to graduate students is declining. Diploma programmes now enrol over 25.5 million students in India, or 7.4 percent of the total student population. Most of them are studying to become teachers, nurses, or technicians. Certificate programmes have 1.4 million students enrolled in them, while PG Diploma programmes have 2.3 million students enrolled in them, respectively accounting for



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0.4% and 0.7% of the total share. There are less than fifty students enrolled in the Ph.D., M.Phil., or Integrated programme( FICCI, 2013).

The largest student body may be found in AHS and SS departments. There are now 109.4 million students enrolled, with males making up 47.1% and females 52.9%. There are 42,9 percent male and 42,9 percent female students majoring in Science. Engineering and technology attracts 42,500,000 students worldwide. The majority of engineers are men (72%). Women are underrepresented. Electronics, Computer, Mechanical, and Electrical Engineering are just a few of the 17 specialisations that make up this sector. There are 10.9 million people studying mechanical engineering, 7.6 million studying computer engineering, 7.4 million studying electronics engineering, 6.3 million studying civil engineering, and 4.7 million studying electrical engineering. The gender breakdown of the 38.6 million people studying commerce is 53.8% male and 46.2% female. Around 6.8 million individuals are enrolled in an IT/CA programme. A higher proportion of female students enrol in the field of Medical Science. There are around 8.99 million students in the world, with approximately 5.49 million being female. There are 5.2 million students majoring in management, with 3.3 million being male. The male-to-female ratio among law school students is 2.2:1. Most doctoral candidates study science or engineering/technology. The fields of social science and management attract the second-most Ph.D. candidates. Women are underrepresented in STEM fields including Agriculture, Engineering, and Physical Education.

Approximately 52.46 percent of Uttar Pradesh's students are male and 47.54 percent are female. Male students make up 56.37% of Maharashtra's total, while female students account for 43.63%. There are 52.25 percent male and 47.75 percent female students in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, respectively. Female enrolment in Karnataka is at 48.42%, with male enrollment at 51.58. In Rajasthan, there are more males than women. Students in less-than-convenient locations now have a viable option in the form of distance learning. The percentage of distance learning college students is 11.05 percent, with women making up 46.3% of the total. Sixteen percent of India's estimated distance education students are taught by institutions in only six states. A total of 4.9% of students in Delhi, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Telangana are studying from afar. According to the data in the table, 59% of all students enrolled in universities and their affiliated departments and programmes choose to take their courses through remote mode. The percentages of distance learners enrolled in master's, bachelor's, PG diploma, diploma, and certificate



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programmes are respectively 61%, 62%, 43%, 34%, and 69%. Few students enrol remotely and are fully integrated. Even though they enrol a much larger percentage of students (67%) only around 78% of colleges are private (aided and unassisted). There has been a rise of 18.5% in enrollment during the last five years. An overall rise in student numbers. The average CAGR over 5 years is 3.5%, but it soars to 16.5% for integrated programmes. There has been a steady rise in student body size at institutions. National and central universities are expanding. The ratio of female students to male students is higher at all types of institutions except the State Private University.

Because to developments such as globalisation, economic liberalisation, and the rise of the computer, distance learning in higher education has flourished. Enrollment in distance learning programmes increased by 10.9 percent between 1980–1981 and 2013–14. The number of students enrolled in online courses increased from 0.170,000 in 1980–81 to 5.17,000,000 in 2013–14. There are now 799 colleges and universities represented on the AISHE site, up from 621 in 2010–11. From 32,974 in 2010-11, there are now 39,071 colleges and universities. Across the country, enrollment at both public and private colleges is skyrocketing. There has been a proliferation of higher education institutions in the states of Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Utrakhhand, and West Bengal. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Telangana are among the states that have established a select number of universities. There are more universities in most states. The goal of a professional education programme is to equip students with the specific set of skills, knowledge, and abilities that are necessary for success in a chosen profession or occupation. More students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels enrol in professional programmes at private universities than at public universities. Registration for graduate and professional programmes exceeds that of undergraduate programmes. There has been an uptick in freshmen enrolment in technical universities. The three fields with the largest increases in student enrollment between 2006-07 and 2014-2015 were engineering (156.74 percent), architecture (96.93 percent), and pharmacy (16.99 percent). (Indian Government 2018).

Graduate students are flocking to the nation's technical universities. From 2006–07 to 2014–15, enrollment in engineering and technology programmes increased by 818.05 percent, followed by architecture and town planning (585.71 percent) and pharmacy (251.26 percent). There has been a rise in students attending technical colleges that provide diplomas.



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Higher education establishments in the fields of engineering and technology had the greatest increase in enrollment (108.73 percent), followed by those in the fields of architecture and town planning and pharmacy.

Summary: There has been a dramatic increase in the number of private institutions providing both traditional and specialised higher education. Even if there have been opportunities for higher education institutions to grow because to globalisation and economic liberalisation, there is still a gap because of rising demand for higher education. Management and technical education are offered by a variety of schools, some of which are independent nonprofits with approval from the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). Organizational dedication, teacher effectiveness, and a positive work environment are crucial to the success of any professional training programme. Management at India's universities hasn't focused on improving the system's efficiency or quality. Efficiency and effectiveness may be increased by creating, refining, and using a system to measure production and performance. Whole quality management should be implemented at universities with a focus on students and society. To provide students with high-quality academic inputs and a solid industry-university interface, universities must use business process re-engineering, networking of on-campus and off-campus staff, and business process outsourcing. Colleges and universities must have systems in place that are conducive to learning. New students might benefit from guidance from a counselling centre as they decide what courses to take. So that disadvantaged and low-income students are not at a disadvantage, universities and colleges should build and improve infrastructure such as classrooms, libraries, leisure centres, internet access, and academic assistance that can be accessed remotely.

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